

**CALIFORNIA REGIONAL WATER QUALITY CONTROL BOARD
CENTRAL COAST REGION**

895 Aerovista Place, Suite 101
San Luis Obispo, California 93401-7906

**NOTICE OF INTENT TO USE FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT IN LIEU
OF A NEGATIVE DECLARATION FOR
THE SANTA BARBARA HARBOR MAINTENANCE DREDGING PROJECT**

In lieu of preparing its own Negative Declaration, the Regional Water Quality Control Board, Central Coast Region, acting as Lead Agency under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA), intends to use the Environmental Assessment (EA)/Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI), prepared by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Los Angeles District (Corps), for a project that includes the annual removal of up to 600,000 cubic yards (approximately 460,000 cubic meters) of littoral material from the entrance and navigation channels, and from the sand trap within the channels. The proposed project site is bounded on the north by the West Basin of the Santa Barbara Harbor, on the east by East Beach, on the southwest by Leadbetter Beach, and on the west by the west breakwater.

The proposed project (Santa Barbara Harbor Maintenance Dredging Project) will dispose material downcoast of the harbor on East Beach. Sediment has been tested in accordance with applicable regulations and found to be compatible with beach disposal. The proposed project is required to maintain Federally-authorized channel configurations, and to restore and ensure safe navigability within the harbor.

Dredging is expected to be performed using an electric hydraulic cutterhead (pipeline) dredge; although a hopper dredge, clamshell dredge with disposal barge, or a combination of dredge platforms may also be used. Operations are expected to occur from September 1 to April 30 each year. Single-point discharge will be utilized from March 1 through April 30 to minimize impacts to grunion.

Under CEQA, state agencies are encouraged to use a FONSI prepared pursuant to the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) rather than preparing a new CEQA document, when the FONSI, prepared before a Negative Declaration or EIR, would otherwise be completed for the project; and the FONSI complies with CEQA Guidelines.

Under CEQA, Section 15225(a) further states that "where the federal agency circulated the EIS or Finding of No Significant Impact for Public review as broadly as state or local law may require and gave notice meeting the standards in

Section 15072(a) or 15087(a), the lead Agency under CEQA may use the federal document in the place of an EIR or Negative Declaration without recirculation the federal document for public review. One review and comment period is enough. Prior to using the federal document in this situation, the lead agency shall give notice that it will use the federal document in the place of an EIR or negative declaration and that it believes that the federal document meets the requirement of CEQA.”

The Corps prepared an Environmental Assessment (EA) for the **Santa Barbara Harbor Maintenance Dredging Project** to address impacts for the environmental resources due to implementation of the proposed dredging operations. The Corps distributed the Draft EA/FONSI for a 30-day public review period from April 12, 2010 to May 12, 2010 to all Federal, State, local agencies and concerned public. The Corps also submitted notice of completion to the State Clearing House with 15 copies of the Draft EA/FONSI to be distributed to the State agencies. Copies of the Draft EA was placed at public libraries in the City of Santa Barbara. A notice was placed at the public libraries for the availability of the Draft EA/FONSI. A newspaper release was provided to the local newspapers including the Daily Sound and Santa Barbara News-Press. Comments on the Draft EA/FONSI received by the Corps would be incorporated in the Final EA/FONSI. This meets the requirements of a 30-day of public review period for an environmental document under CEQA.

This Notice is provided by the State Agency, the California Water Quality Control Board, for the Santa Barbara Harbor Maintenance Dredging Project, the lead agency under CEQA. The State would adopt a FONSI for the Proposed Action. The EA and FONSI include a description of the Proposed Action and evaluate potential for adverse environmental impact. The EA concludes the Proposed Action would have no significant impacts to the environment.

Digital versions of the EA and FONSI will be available at the Water Board website, <http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/rwqcb3/>. Should you have any questions, please contact to Mr. Dominic Roques, by email at Droques@waterboards.ca.gov or by mail to:

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